208 After V-J day Communist armies seized many urban centers in North China and, meanwhile, Communist propaganda agencies began to use certain modern media of mass communication such as printed newspapers, radio, and motion pictures in the conduct of their work. But the use of such modern media of mass communication at that time was very limited in scale; more extensive use did not occur there until the "liberation" of Peking and Tientsin. For obvious reasons, this discussion of propaganda and public information media is limited to those which can be best treated on a regional basis.

A. The Press as a Propaganda Medium and its Structure

204 Characterized by a high degree of specialization, the structure of the press in North China, which is but an integral part of the press in Communist China as a whole, is such as to enable each of its parts to reach specific groups of audience and serve a definite function in the socialist (and Communist) upbringing of the masses.

The press in North China is divided horizontally and vertically. The horizontal division follows very closely the hierarchical structure of the government and the Communist Party of China. At each hierarchical level there is an appropriate press to serve the Party, the government, and public organizations.

At the apex of the press pyramid is the central press, serving the central authorities in Peking. While newspapers on the central

204 level are intended for nationwide consumption, most have their largest circulation in North China becuase of geographical proximity. Thus, it would be a great mistake to ignore newspapers on the central level in a survey of the role of the press as a medium of propaganda and public information in North China.

The first place in the central press is held by the official organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, Jen-min Jih-pao [People's Daily], which currently has a daily circulation of about 710,000. Since its editorial policy is made by the supreme authority of the Party, it usually sets the tone for the press of the nation in commenting on national issues.

Other well-known daily newspapers on the central level printed in North China include the Kung-jen Jih-pao [Workers' Daily] , the Kuang-ming Jih-pao [Enlightenment Daily] and the Ta-Kung Pao [the Ta-kung Daily], having a combined daily circulation of 1,040,000.[3]

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2. Liao Kai-lung, "Chung-hua Jen-min Kung-ho-kuoti Pao K'an" ["Newspapers and periodicals in the People's Republic of China"] Kuang-ming Jih-pao [Enlightenment Daily] , May 20, 1955.

3. Except for the Ta-kung Daily, which is published in Tientsin, all these newspapers are printed in Peking.

204 In addition, there are a number of newspapers on the provincial level. Notable are the Hopei Jih-pao [Hopei Dai'y] and the Shansi Jih-pao [the Shansi Daily]. The former is published in Paoting, Hopei Province, and the latter in taiyuan, Shansi Province; both are official organs of thair respective provincial authorities.

Below the provincial level are the newspapers on the administrative district level. At the base of the pyramid are newspapers on the hsien or city level.

The horizontal levels of the press hierarchy are subdivided along functional lines into groups of newspapers for various groups of readers. For example, the People's Daily is directed to all citizens throughout the country; the Workers' Daily, toworkers; the Chung-kuo Ch'ing-nien Pao [the Chinese Youth News], to youth; and the Shansi Nung-min Pao [the Shansi Farmers' News] to farmers in Shansi Province.

203 Printed newspapers are supplemented by many mimeographed newspapers and handwritten "wall newspapers" and "blackboard newspapers" in small localities, factories schools, mass communications, and agricultural producers' co-operatives. These special newspapers are also organs of the Party and the government, and they have the usual editors, editorial boards, and correspondents. The local Party branches constantly keep a watchful eye on their operation and development, and from time to time issue new instructions and regulations to keep them in

203 line.

The importance of these special newspapers must not be overlooked. In view of the fact that the combined circulation of all the printed newspapers in the region is still small as compared with the total population, it must be obvious that the Communists have made maximum use of such special newspapers for propaganda and agitation in addition to dissemination of public information. Like the oral agitator and propagandist, the wall newspaper and blackboard newspaper have, for mass communication, the advantages of flexibility and adaptability. These advantages are particularly conducive to the work of agitation. They can deal more effectively with the problem of production by seizing upon the most appropriate opportunities to criticize indifferent workers and praise those who are energetic.

204 While the overwhelming majority of the newspapers in North China is owned and operated by the Communist Party of China, the government, or mass organizations, the Enlightenment Daily is jointly operated by the so-called "democratic parties" and the Ta-kung Daily is financed by private interests. But these two newspapers are, for all practical purposes, a part of the propaganda apparatus of the Communist regime since they are subject to the same strict control and supervision of the regime as are other newspapers. In point of fact, the Enlightenment

204 Daily has been instructed to devote its space to cultural and educational news and to the exposition of the cultural and educational policies of the regime.[4] The Ta-kung Daily, once an impartial and most influential newspaper under the Kuomintang regime, is, now, under orders from Communist authorities to specialize in the dissemination and discussion of news relating to international affairs and economic problems.[5]

Subscription to the newspapers in this region are handled through the local post offices. The Communists claim that this arrangement has resulted in greater speed of delivery and a wider circulation.[6]

B. Propaganda Work of the Press

204 208 As an instrument of propaganda, the press constantly devotes a large amount of space to the publication of "lectures," documents, and other pronouncements elucidating Communist theories, the Communist Party line, and the policies of the government, with a view to remolding the ideology of the masses and influencing public attitudes on political issues. Generally, the press is given very little freedom of action. Important material is distributed to the local press by the New China News Agency. According to a regulation promulgated by the now defunct Information Administration of the Government Administration Council, all "large newspapers"

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4. Enlightenment Daily, Dec. 25, 1952.
5. Ibid.
6. Chieh-fang Jih-pao [Liberation Daily], Shanghai, March 13, 1951.

in the country must print in full the important news releases and special articles distributed by the New China News Agency.[7] The newspapers in the region, to further Communist ideology and government policies, write and publish articles supplementary to those distributed by national propaganda organs. Supplementary articles are usually written in a more popular style and expound the general themes by linking them with local issues or concrete problems whenever such an approach is permissible and feasible. In point of fact, newspapers in North China are said to be quite successful in this regard.

C. Agitation Work of the Press

The press in North China makes a constant effort to eulogize the "People's Dictatorship," Marxism, Leninism, the thought of Mao Tse-tung, and the history and contribution of the Communist Party of China. It prints ordinary news items in such a way as to inculcate in the people a feeling of national pride and to develop and unwavering faith among them in the socialist construction and socialist transformation of the

7. "Hsin-wen Tsung-shu Kuan-yü Pao-chih Ts'ai-yung Hsin-hua She Tien-kao Ti Kuei-ting" ["The Information Administration's Regulations Concerning the Use of News Releases of the New China News Agency by the Press"], People's Daily, Jan. 12, 1950.

204 country under the leadership of the Communist
208 Party of China. In treating news involving non-Communist countries, the newspapers convey to the readers that the masses of the capitalist system is on its way to destruction, and that present world tensions are all caused by capitalist warmongers, especially those in the United States. After the outbreak of the war in Korea, the anti-American campaign was played up by the press, obviously for the purpose of creating psychological tension in the minds of the Chinese people so that they might be called upon to make greater contributions and sacrifices for the attainment of the ambitious goals set by the region. More recently, the press has been preoccupied with the problem of criticizing and eliminating "bourgeois ideologies" from the minds of the people, especially the intelligentsia.

204 The most important agitation work done by
208 the newspapers concerns the acceleration of
461 production. This is achieved by summarizing and disseminating information about the most successful economic enterprises and farms and the methods and techniques of "advanced" workers and farmers; by explaining to workers and farmers the meaning of the economic measures taken by the Party and government; by bringing to the attention of the population the economic development of the nation; by glorifying the contributions of outstanding individual workers and farmers; by discussing ways and means for the solution of the difficulties facing the country

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208 in its economic construction; and by exhorting
461 the people to make even greater efforts.

D. The Press as a Medium of Public Information

204 Although the press is primarily used to conduct propaganda and agitation, it also contains a large amount of straightforward information on public affairs. As mentioned in another connection, newspapers in this region, as in Communist China as a whole, usually print the text of some important party or government decision and the text of some responsible official's report on the activities of his agency. This is particularly true in the case of the People's Daily, which serves as an official gazette of the Central People's Government. The press also features announcements concerning the commencement of some campaign, the completion of a water conservation project, or the beginning of the construction of a highway project.

True, as indicated earlier, the newspapers do not limit themselves to publishing the texts of important decisions and announcements. They seek to influence the formation of political attitudes; and for this reason they often accompany such informational material with articles to explain and justify the decisions or activities of the Party or government. But if the reader is both judicious and clever in distinguishing between factual presentation of news and efforts of political propaganda, he will still be able to learn from the Communist newspapers what the

204 the latest actions and decisions of the authorities are, especially in the field of internal affairs. It is not an exaggeration to say that Chinese Communist newspapers contain more information on governmental activities than did the former official Kuomintang press. Unlike the former Kuomintang regime, the Communist authorities are apparently not satisfied with the practice of publishing government or Party decisions or decrees in official gazettes, it is their intention to have such materials come to the direct attention of the people, and the most certain way of ensuring that the people will see these materials is to fill the daily news with them.

204 By making the texts of official policies or decisions available to the average citizen, the 208 Communist regime hopes to win his support in their execution. What is denied to the Chinese people on the Mainland today is the right to receive information from sources other than those controlled by the present regime. Because they obtain news on governmental activities only from official sources, the Chinese people have no way of listening to diversified interpretations of news as do the people in the United States. By providing the public with the official version, the Communist press helps the regime to mobilize public opinion and to change attitudes, but it refuses to help the people conduct a public debate on national affairs in a manner we would call democratic. Herein lies the main defect of the Communist press as a medium of public information. Therefore, the charges that the

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204 208 Communist press treats as news social processes rather than events, and that it does not print news until the "official version" has been announced, are matters of secondary importance in an evaluation of the role of the Communist press in the formation of public opinion.

E. The Press as an Instrument of Public Control

Like newspapers in Communist China as a whole, the press in North China performs another function in addition to being a medium of propaganda, agitation, and public information. It has the responsibility of serving as an instrument of mass or public control. This function of the Chinese Communist press is one of the most important aspects of its total social role. Its importance can be best appreciated if one recalls the complexity of the tasks of the regime seeking to regulate every minute detail of national life. The manifold activities of the regime have rendered inadequate the formal instruments of control such as offices of law enforcement, court machinery, the procuratorates, and other supervisory agencies. To supplement these formal agencies of supervision, the regime has found it necessary to establish informal procedure of control over the execution of a tremendous number of complex regulations and orders.

One of the most important instruments of informal control used by the Chinese Communists is the press. The press performs this function by acting as a medium for official and popular criticism of the course of development of Chinese

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208 society and its component parts. Such a function of the Communist press, of course, is performed to some extent by newspapers in many other countries. But it differs greatly in many respects from public criticism found in the press of any of the Western countries. In Communist China, "public criticism" in the press is a formalized phenomenon, actively encouraged and carefully guided by the regime. It has little, if anything, to do with the spontaneous development of public opinion or the personal interpretations of newspaper editors or publishers. Like public criticism in the Soviet press, this function of the press in Communist China is an extension or natural development of the practice of self-criticism which prevails within the organizations of the Communist Party.

On April 22, 1950, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China promulgated a document called "Decisions Concerning the Conduct of Criticism and Self-criticism in Newspapers and Periodicals."[8] The Central Committee of the ruling party called upon the press to "induce" the masses to undertake "open criticism" of all shortcomings and mistakes in the work of the Party and government. Since that time, the newspapers in North China, like papers in the country as a whole, have tried hard to perform this function well. They do so by devoting a large proportion of their totoal space to critical decisions issued by the Party and the government and to editorials and articles expos-

8. For its text, see ibid., April 22, 1950.

ing delinquencies on the part of functionaries and institutions, in order to uncover "bureaucratic manifestations" opportunism, and deviation from the Party line. They also carry out this task by publishing "letters to the editor." Written by either the average citizen or a non-professional correspondent (the Chinese counterpart of the rabsel'kor of the Soviet press), letters of this kind usually express certain grievances and complaints or address certain appeals to Communist authorities on a higher level. More than most other resources available to the people in the region, these letters frequently prove effective in the expression of popular feelings and in securing ameliorative action from the authorities. In short, the "Letters to the Editor" columns in the newspapers not only serve as a center to which the grievances of the citizenry are directed, but also provide the Communist Party with an opportunity to check on the activities of local government and public organizations.

The political impact of self-criticism conducted through the newspapers, however, cannot be evaluated entirely on the basis of the preceding description. "Self-criticism" operates within carefully defined limits which considerably restrict its potential influence as a democratic force. The press is not allowed to criticize indiscriminately. In its decision on April 22, 1950, the Central Committee of the Communist Party cautioned that it was necessary for the press to distinguish "between true and constructive" criticism on the one hand and destructive

204 criticism on the other." By "destructive criti-
208 cism" the Communists meant that which was aimed at repudiating the "People's democratic dictatorship," opposing the "Common Program," destroying social discipline, destroying faith in leadership, and "causing pessimism and disunity among the masses." This means that no criticism can be directed against any basic policy established by the Communist regime. Nor is it permissible for the press to make any open criticism of the top leaders of the regime itself. What the press can do is to criticize officials in a lower echelon who are corrupt, disloyal, or delinquent in the execution of certain policies of the regime. Viewed in this context, it is clear that the press as an instrument of public control is not only relative harmless to the existing regime but is actually designed and operated to support it.

F. Radio as a Propaganda and Public Information

207 Radio, as another medium of propaganda and public information used by the Communists in North China, should be briefly mentioned. Like the press, the radio has been recognized by the Communists as a powerful weapon of political propaganda and education. Beset by technical difficulties, the Chinese Communists did not broadcast in the North China Region until September 1946 when they established a station

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443 517 ●204 Reading material is not only scarce but of poor quality. Among the 34 newspapers taken daily only one can be called a standard newspaper, the *Yi Chih Pao* (益世報). All others are small papers containing only one sheet, usually of stale news, and the lower type of article and novel.

TABLE XXVII. TYPES OF NEWSPAPERS IN THE STORES.

TYPE OF NEWSPAPERS	NO. OF NEWSPAPE
Chun Chiao Pao (群强報)	16
The Pei Hua Real News (實事白話報)	11
The People's Daily (民言日報)	2
The Little Daily (小小日報)	2
The Commercial Daily (商業日報)	1
The Yi Shih Pao (益世報)	1
Shih Pao (實報)	1
Total	34

The quality of the books is also poor. The biggest shop in the town, the pawnshop, has one book only, a pawn lexicon. Four drug stores have some old Chinese medical books. and the rest of the books are all novels of the old type.

13. Communication Facilities.

493 We found that the most popular and convenient means of commuincation is the bicycle, forty-two stores have one or more. The cart is not much used.